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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1537
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY 1885
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY 0558
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0452
RUEHKV/AMEMBASSY KIEV PRIORITY
RUEHLJ/AMEMBASSY LJUBLJANA PRIORITY 0553
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY 1910
RUEHSF/AMEMBASSY SOFIA PRIORITY 0536
RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI PRIORITY 0239
RUEHTI/AMEMBASSY TIRANA PRIORITY 4333
RUEHVL/AMEMBASSY VILNIUS PRIORITY 0115
RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB PRIORITY 0792
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 2995
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0960

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SUBJECT: ROME MEETING OF RC-WEST EMBASSIES: GUIDANCE REQUEST

¶1. This is an action request. See para 5.

¶2. The Italian Foreign Ministry will host a meeting on February 9 for Embassies of countries with forces serving under Italian leadership in Western Afghanistan as part of NATO's ISAF mission. The meeting is part of a GOI effort to encourage cohesion and push for greater resources in Regional Command-West over what will certainly be a challenging year involving Afghan presidential and municipal elections and a U.S. military surge.

¶3. It will also be a stocktaking of military pledges after the January 14 force generation conference and will encourage RC-West nations to dig deep to meet outstanding CJSOR shortfalls. The GOI has invited the PRT leads in RC-West -- the U.S., Spain, and Lithuania -- and those with forces in the area -- Slovenia, Albania, Croatia, Bulgaria, Denmark, Hungary, Georgia, and Ukraine -- and also invited Greece because of their close collaboration in Kabul. This is not intended to be an extensive discussion on the state and direction of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan but an effort to focus the military and civilian attention of RC-West contributors on the questions already on the table. MFA NATO Director Carlo Batori told us that the GOI decided to hold the meeting in Rome because many of the RC-West contributors are smaller nations without representation in Kabul.

¶4. The meeting should be short and MFA Director General Luca Giansanti will provide an overview of the calendar for to upcoming year and representatives of the Italian General Staff will provide an overview of existing and pledged resources for RC-West and outline critical outstanding deficiencies.

¶5. Charge will represent Embassy at Feb 9 event. Post would greatly appreciate any guidance by COB Friday, February 6 on topics the Department would like the Charge to raise about the agenda in Afghanistan for the coming year and any specific concerns or details on Regional Command West. The GOI and other participating nations are particularly interested in the U.S. vision for this year, details on the planned U.S. military and civilian surges in Afghanistan, and role and agenda of the Special Envoy for Afghanistan-Pakistan. Please direct any information to both Liam Wasley and Morgan Hall in Embassy Rome.
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